CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.688
18 August 1994

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 18 August 1994, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Sirous Nasseri (Islamic Republic of Iran)

GE.94-63859 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 688th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

First of all, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Mr. David Logan, who will be the first speaker today. Let me also welcome the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, Mr. Jaakko Blomberg, who will address the Conference for the second time this year. The presence here today of these distinguished visitors is a demonstration of the sustained interest of their Governments in our work and of the importance they attach to the work of our Conference. I am sure the Conference is looking forward to their statements.

But let me first start by stating that it is a great honour for me to preside over the Conference on Disarmament. I shall endeavour, to the best of my ability, to conduct the work of the Conference effectively and efficiently as we prepare the final report of the 1994 session for adoption. I am, in this respect, much encouraged by the work of my predecessor and my friend Ambassador Brotodiningrat of Indonesia. I appreciate very much his wise leadership and the excellent guidance he offered to our work in the Conference. I thank also Mr. Petrovsky, the Secretary-General of the Conference, and Mr. Bensmail, the Deputy Secretary-General, and his staff, whose assistance is an essential necessity for any success in our work.

The final years of the 1980s witnessed the end of the East-West conflict that had dominated international politics for more than 40 years. New avenues of cooperation opened up, as a result, allowing the United Nations as well as multilateral institutions to play a more effective role. In the cold war period the degree of interaction between East and West, embodied in the Warsaw and NATO establishments, was limited because confrontation tended to take precedence over cooperation. Dialogue, including dialogue on arms control, was pursued largely to reduce tensions and was generally limited to areas of mutual concern. This is bound to change in this new era and we should continue to witness more and more cooperation in all international issues and, particularly, in the area of disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament, like many other aspects of international politics, has been largely affected by the end of the cold war. Now, for the first time in its history, the Conference can engage itself extensively in producing major international disarmament agreements. In this context the Conference on Disarmament should, particularly, take a careful look at the ongoing changes in military postures and military doctrines in order to adapt itself more appropriately to the needs of the time and be enabled to respond to the expectations of the international community; expectations that are in tune with the changes in the political world and are indeed well justified.

Now that the international climate seems favourable, we should not miss any opportunity to explore all possibilities to more forward and move fast. The Conference is well placed, today, to deal effectively with nuclear weapons

(The President)

and other weapons of mass destruction as well as conventional weapons. The conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention is a clear manifestation of the capability and credibility of this Conference.

On nuclear issues, where nuclear deterrence has largely become an obsolete and irrelevant doctrine, new avenues need to be explored and the related agenda items revitalized. Nuclear disarmament should really now be the aim of our work and we must not spare any effort to make this goal realizable within a reasonable period of time. For the moment, however, early conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (CTBT) is a first priority for all of us in the Conference. Progress has been encouraging in this regard, yet we should not lose sight of the fact that much work still lies ahead. I urge all delegations to cooperate for early preparation of a rolling text.

In the Ad Hoc Committee on outer space we had good progress this year. The Friend of the Chair on confidence-building measures and terminology produced very useful working papers which could streamline the work of the Committee in its future session.

On transparency in armaments, substantive discussions have taken place in the Ad Hoc Committee at this session. The result of these discussions bears much significance as it will be forwarded to the United Nations Secretary-General for the preparation of his report to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

The work of the Ad Hoc Committee on negative security assurances enjoys additional importance this year as the 1995 non-proliferation Treaty conference is directly ahead of us and I believe, therefore, that the report of the Committee will be examined with much interest. I hope the substantial discussions that have taken place in the Committee could lead to a promising conclusion.

On prohibition of fissile materials the Conference has not yet been able to establish the ad hoc committee on the issue due to lack of consensus on the mandate. Here, I would like to invite the delegations to make the best use of the short time we have left and endeavour to find a consensus formulation in this regard so that negotiations on a treaty may commence as soon as possible.

Concerning the expansion of membership of the Conference, Ambassador Lampreia of Brazil, as Friend of the President of the Conference, has embarked upon a series of wide-ranging consultations in order to find a compromise formulation which could command consensus. I have requested that he continue his consultations as the Friend of the President on this pressing issue and I thank him for his acceptance. I am certain that this question will be pursued with diligence. I shall render my full support to this with the hope that a solution may be reached soon. As regards the functioning of the Conference, previous discussions in the context of IEF have resulted in some positive changes helping the Conference to better organize its work and

(The President)

pursue its objectives more effectively. That work has been continued this year and further improvements are under consideration. We have also had the opportunity this year to take a closer look at the possibilities to ameliorate and trim up the agenda; work that is certainly worth the effort though it shall require more time for further consideration.

In a nutshell, I believe the Conference can fairly be judged to have progressed well in discharging its tasks for this year and I am certain that, during this final month of activity for 1994, we shall witness eager and enthusiastic participation by all delegations in the efforts to consolidate the outcome of the work this year and prepare and present a valuable report to the General Assembly.

I have on the list of speakers for today the representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Finland, Algeria and Australia. I give the floor to the Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Mr. David Logan.

Mr. LOGAN (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I am pleased to have this opportunity to address the Conference on Disarmament at an important moment in its history. We are coming to the end of a particularly useful session in which we have done some ground-breaking work on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We are also looking ahead to a crucial Conference next year on the future of the non-proliferation Treaty. I would like to focus on both of these, and, in particular, to outline our thinking on options for NPT extension.

Before turning to these issues, however, I wish to say a few words about the CD itself. First, my Government believes that the strength of the Conference on Disarmament as a negotiating forum would be substantially enhanced by the expansion of its membership. In particular, to continue to exclude from membership countries whose ratification of a CTBT will, in our view, be vital cannot but handicap our efforts. I strongly hope that the present impasse on this issue can be overcome so that all interested countries are fully engaged in the Conference's work. We continue to believe that all those countries that have applied so far should be admitted as members as soon as possible.

Secondly, I should like to stress the importance which the United Kingdom attaches to the work of the CD in the field of conventional weapons. History has shown that the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of conventional weapons has contributed to countless conflicts and led to the loss of millions of lives - far more than have been lost through the use of so-called weapons of mass destruction. We were delighted when the CD finally took up its global responsibility in this area with the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee for transparency in armaments in 1992. We are committed to playing a full and active role in this important committee, which we hope will produce concrete, practical proposals to increase openness and transparency in this vital area.

(Mr. Logan, United Kingdom)

Negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty have, rightly, been the focus of the CD's work this year. We have made important progress. I am glad to say that we are now on the verge of securing a goal that has thwarted the international community for over 30 years.

At the outset of our deliberations on a CTBT some observers expected a treaty to be completed within a few weeks. That was always unrealistic. Despite the hard work which so many members of the CD have put in, it long ago became clear that negotiation of a good treaty is not a simple matter and will demand considerable effort from all parties. I would like to emphasize the importance of concluding a good treaty. By good, I mean a robust and durable treaty that will have the widest possible adherence and will be effectively verifiable. This is essential if it is to make a meaningful contribution to our non-proliferation goals. We must make sure that we get the treaty right, even if it takes longer than we might like to do so. After all, we are looking to negotiate a treaty of unlimited duration from which withdrawal cannot be lightly undertaken.

I should emphasize that we have no interest in prolonging the negotiations unnecessarily. But equally, it would be mistaken to impose artificial deadlines for completing the negotiations if that would lead to an unsatisfactory treaty. We would be delighted if a satisfactory treaty could be agreed before the NPT extension and review conference is held in the spring of next year. But even if it were not, we are confident that the momentum now exists to carry these negotiations to a successful conclusion in due course. Artificial deadlines will not help that process. On the other hand, we have also made clear that our commitment to work constructively for a CTBT reflects our assumption that the NPT will remain in force as well.

Although we are now nearing the end of this year's formal negotiating session, and I know you have a busy autumn in front of you, both here and in New York, I hope it will be possible to make full use of all available time for inter-sessional work. This would leave us well placed to resume negotiations during the next session. The United Kingdom delegation will continue to play an active and constructive role. In particular, I am glad that we have been able to make available the expertise and experience of Dr. Peter Marshall as a Friend of the Chairman of the verification Working Group.

I wish I could be so optimistic about the proposed negotiation for a cut-off convention. Last year the United Kingdom stated its commitment to participate in negotiations on a convention prohibiting the production of fissile material for explosive purposes. We understood then that there would be difficult issues to resolve in negotiating such a convention. For example, the precise scope of the prohibitions, the exact detail of verification arrangements, the financial implications of these arrangements, and the means of ensuring that all relevant States become parties.

But, like most others, we were quite prepared to get on with the business of negotiating solutions to these difficulties on the basis of last year's General Assembly resolution. We remain ready to do that. It is therefore

(Mr. Logan, United Kingdom)

frustrating and disappointing that a few States have stood in the way of this - by seeking, at a very late stage, to alter the scope of the mandate in a manner which destroyed the consensus established by the General Assembly.

The result of their action is that we now have no mandate at all. The rest of us are entitled to ask whose interests have been served by this. We hope those States who are preventing progress will think again, so that negotiations on this difficult but important topic can begin soon.

There is another difficult subject which over the years has been much discussed in the CD. I refer to the question of security assurances. We have long sympathized with the desire of countries that have renounced the nuclear option to obtain an assurance that they will not be the victims of nuclear attack. We have offered clear assurances on these lines for some time. We stand by these assurances.

At the same time we have been working with other nuclear-weapon States to try to devise a joint text on assurances which might offer further reassurance to non-nuclear-weapon States. The joint assurance that the United Kingdom, United States and Russia have offered to Ukraine, conditional on her accession to the NPT, is a timely example of the cooperation possible between the nuclear-weapons States. I hope that this will provide a useful basis for our further work in this area.

As members of the CD will know, we have also long offered a positive security assurance to non-nuclear-weapon States in which we commit ourselves to taking appropriate action at the United Nations Security Council in the event of nuclear aggression or threat of aggression against a non-nuclear-weapon State. As part of our work on assurances, we are willing to consider ways in which our positive security assurance could be further elaborated. This will not be easy. It is very difficult to specify a response to a hypothetical event, and we would not want to give the impression of in any way restricting the scope of the current assurance, which recognizes that the United Nations Security Council will be free to decide on a course of action. But we are willing to try.

I know that some countries believe that progress in this area should be taken into account in determining their attitude to extension of the NPT. We do not think that such a link is justified. We recognize the importance which many countries attach to security assurances. But, whatever changes might or might not be made in the coming months, no one should lose sight of the simple fact that non-nuclear-weapon States in the NPT already benefit from our assurances.

All the negotiations and discussions which I have just mentioned are of course taking place in the build-up to the NPT extension and review conference. Scheduled for April/May 1995, this Conference must take a momentous decision on the Treaty's future duration. I should therefore like to say a few words now about the options which we believe are open to the parties and about the option which we believe they should choose.

(Mr. Logan, United Kingdom)

Clearly any decision on the NPT's extension must conform with the provisions of article X, which explicitly provides for three different types of extension decision to be taken in 1995. It states that Treaty parties will meet 25 years after entry into force to: "decide whether the [NPT] shall continue in force indefinitely, or shall be extended for an additional fixed period or periods." It seems therefore that the Treaty's negotiators deliberately formulated the language of article X.2 to restrict the extension to three options.

The United Kingdom's position on Treaty extension is well known. We aim to secure the Treaty's unconditional and indefinite extension. If the parties choose this option, no further decision need ever be taken by them. In our view no other form of extension decision would so clearly demonstrate States parties' commitment to support and maintain the Treaty.

Of the possible alternatives, a decision to extend the Treaty for a single fixed period would raise the problem of what would happen at the end of this period. The Treaty only provides for one conference on extension, the one to be held next year. Therefore, extension for a fixed period would imply termination of the Treaty at the end of that period. While it is theoretically possible to provide for a further extension conference, this would require Treaty amendment, and the amendment procedures are complicated. Any amendment would require not only the approval of a majority of parties - including all members of the IAEA Board and all five nuclear-weapons States - but also ratification by a majority of parties constituted in the same way. This would be a lengthy and cumbersome process which would risk unravelling the Treaty, and which could not under any circumstances be completed before the review conference takes place.

The third option - a decision to extend the Treaty by a series of fixed periods - would also cause problems. Difficult questions regarding the length of each period, the number of periods and the mechanism that would be needed to go from one period to the next would need to be resolved. As in the case of the fixed-period option, there is a risk that such mechanisms would require Treaty amendment.

In our view, both the fixed-period and fixed-periods options run the risk of undermining confidence in the Treaty and eroding support for it. Eventually this might even result in its expiration. Only indefinite extension will ensure that the Treaty endures, and that we have the best chance of preserving and building on the current level of nuclear security which is in all of our interests.

I make these comments because I think it is important that we are clear about what extension options are available to the parties under the Treaty. As you will know, the United Kingdom favours indefinite extension of the NPT. I want to underline that it remains our firm view that indefinite extension is clearly in the interests of all parties.

(Mr. Logan, United Kingdom)

The fact is that the NPT is essential to the prevention of nuclear proliferation. It provides a widely accepted framework for the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons. It allows and encourages the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. There is nothing wrong with this Treaty that cannot be put right by securing universal adherence to it, ensuring compliance with it, and continuing to work for the full realization of the aspirations it embodies. Nothing is gained by limited extension. Is there any NPT party that feels its security would be enhanced were the NPT to end next May? Or if the Treaty's long-term future was rendered uncertain? On the contrary, the security of everyone would be enhanced by indefinite extension.

Before I conclude, I would like to say a few words about the most pressing challenge currently facing the Treaty and its associated verification mechanism: I refer to North Korea's non-compliance with its safeguards agreement with IAEA. We firmly believe that any final settlement of this issue must include full transparency of North Korea's past, present and future nuclear programmes. We cannot afford to give the impression that the terms of the NPT and its associated safeguards agreements represent an à la carte menu from which parties can make a choice. We welcome the willingness of the new North Korean leadership to continue dialogue with the United States and to seek ways of resolving this problem. They should be in no doubt as to the determination of the international community to insist on full acceptance of their NPT obligations. But we hope that North Korea will demonstrate willingness to address the issue constructively in the next round of negotiations.

Our conclusions, therefore, are as follows: first, that we must sustain the excellent progress which has been made towards finally negotiating a comprehensive test-ban treaty; secondly, that we must overcome the artificial obstacles that have been put in the way of beginning negotiations for a cut-off convention; thirdly, that we must continue to address the issue of security assurances, while not forgetting that important security assurances have already been given to all non-nuclear-weapon States party to the NPT; and lastly, that the NPT must be extended indefinitely and unconditionally. The United Kingdom is working hard to secure all these objectives, and will continue to do so.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for his important statement. I now give the floor to the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, Mr. Jaakko Blomberg.

Mr. BLOMBERG (Finland): Mr. President, let me first congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference. I am sure that the Conference will benefit from your diplomatic skills.

The ending of the cold war created a new world. The international community now faces unprecedented opportunities. At the same time, new conflicts around the world are a bitter reminder that new opportunities can also turn into new disasters.

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

The effort of adapting international institutions - both regional and global - to the changed situation continues. The international community is seeking new, cooperative approaches to new security challenges.

The need for change extends also to disarmament. The multilateral arms control agenda and the working methods of the disarmament community should be reviewed to match the new realities. The work of the First Committee of the General Assembly and the United Nations Disarmament Commission should be oriented accordingly. The Conference on Disarmament is already beginning to concentrate on issues that are important today. Finland supports further efforts to this end. We commend the work done by Ambassador Norberg as a Special Coordinator to update the agenda of the CD.

Arms control and disarmament efforts are not undertaken in a vacuum. The focus has shifted to non-proliferation efforts and to supporting conflict prevention and crisis management. Dealing with the excess military capacity accumulated during the cold war years presents another new challenge. Today's arms control agenda should centre around these tasks. To meet these new tasks, the input and involvement of countries around the world and in all regions of the world is of vital importance.

The need for a global approach highlights the urgency of reviewing the composition of the Conference on Disarmament. We regret the present deadlock which is undermining the credibility of the whole Conference. The Conference was last enlarged in 1978, an aeon ago as far as world politics is concerned. Yet the doors remain closed. Ultimately what is at stake is the role of arms control in today's world. We expect the present CD members to make every effort to include the proposed 23 countries as members soon, well before the end of the test-ban talks.

It is important to see arms control and disarmament in a wider context of international peace and security. We support the integration of multilateral disarmament with the United Nations activities related to preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building. The concepts presented by the Secretary-General in his report on "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" provided a valuable basis for the necessary follow-up.

The role of arms control treaties and the aim of seeking universal adherence to them have gained added significance. So have the need to insist on compliance with existing commitments as well as effective verification of actual compliance. International agreements on arms control and disarmament establish norms for responsible behaviour. It is vital for the security of all Member States that the United Nations is ready to act in accordance with its Charter if faced with grave violations of multilateral disarmament agreements.

Besides a credible framework of arms control agreements, cooperative security calls for measures that increase confidence between States. One could hardly seek cooperative security without trying to increase openness and transparency in military matters.

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

Through confidence-building measures, a dynamic element can be incorporated into arms control. Such measures provide for early warning, but they can also be designed specifically for existing situations of tension so as to reduce the risk of conflict.

We find the work related to transparency in armaments particularly important, not only because it addresses conventional weapons that are being used every day in conflicts around the world, but because it introduces the element of confidence-building, a new one in the CD context.

So far, the CD has mainly been engaged in general discussion about transparency. We hope that next year the Ad Hoc Committee moves into elaborating concrete measures.

In this area, it may not always be feasible to strive for the traditional type of outcome, legally binding agreements. The CD could also look into possibilities of arriving at other types of specific outcomes, such as model agreements or politically binding commitments that could be endorsed through a General Assembly resolution.

In our view, the CD should contribute to building a universal basis for openness and transparency. The United Nations standardized reporting mechanism for military expenditures and the more recent Register of Conventional Arms are already two important elements of a global CBM network.

As regards the arms Register, in our view the priority at this point should be on consolidation and expansion of participation in this information exchange. We also agree with those who stress the need to expand the Register. Here it seems realistic to expect that the inclusion of new weapons categories and of holdings and procurement can only happen gradually and start with provision of information on a voluntary basis.

In the regional context, Finland welcomes the new steps taken by the ASEAN countries. Arms control and confidence-building plays an important part also in the Middle East peace process, where we have witnessed significant progress.

In Europe, where the lines of confrontation were most sharply drawn, confidence-building measures paved the way for reduction of offensive and destabilizing military capabilities and led to new cooperative approaches towards security. The legacy of the recent past is a difficult one: the geopolitical landscape has been transformed, new social and economic structures need to be built. Subregional tensions, even war, have re-emerged.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe process is the broad framework for overcoming this legacy. It enshrines shared values and provides forums for security cooperation and conflict management. The creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and NATO's Partnership for Peace programme illustrate how profound the change has been - former adversaries are working

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

together for a better future. Now more than ever, it is a pivotal task for the international community to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. 1995 will be a watershed year in this regard.

Finland has been a staunch supporter of the non-proliferation Treaty from the very beginning. We remain so. The NPT has served and continues to serve our own security and well-being. We support the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Treaty.

Finland has put forward the candidature of Mr. Patokallio, Coordinator for Non-proliferation Affairs in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, for the post of Chairman of the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee for the 1995 NPT Conference. His candidature has been endorsed by the NPT Western Group. We hope that his candidature will receive the support of all the other States parties as well.

Rapid conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, a goal which Finland has long supported, would make a contribution to the success of the NPT 1995 Conference. We hope that the Ad Hoc Committee under the able leadership of Ambassador Marín Bosch could come up with a comprehensive draft text still within this year's session. Such a rolling text would provide a good basis for continuing the drafting work intensively during the inter-sessional period.

Let me in this context reiterate our view that the test-ban treaty should be truly comprehensive: no nuclear-weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, ever, anywhere. The treaty should contain an international verification system from the very beginning that would deter possible violators.

In our view, a functional interrelationship exists between verification of the test-ban treaty and the activities of IAEA. It should be duly reflected in setting up a CTBT organization.

Finland supports Ambassador Shannon in his efforts to find a consensus on the mandate for negotiations on the prohibition of production of fissile material for weapons purposes. The consensus from the last General Assembly should be a good basis for initiating the negotiations. Better control of the existing stocks of fissile material is something that should also be addressed but, in our view, this should happen separately from the cut-off mandate, perhaps in the framework of IAEA.

A consensus on the cut-off mandate should, in our view, be followed by tasking an expert group to prepare the technical issues related to the verification of the future treaty during the inter-sessional period. In our view, the expert work could take place in Vienna. Such a solution would facilitate a smooth start of the negotiations from the very beginning of the next session.

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

The assurances given to the non-nuclear-weapon States against nuclear aggression have gained new importance from the non-proliferation perspective. States such as mine that have made an unambiguous non-proliferation commitment have the right to assurances against the threat or use of nuclear weapons. As one way towards a universal legally binding agreement on security assurances, we could support an arrangement whereby uniform assurances are given through a Security Council resolution.

We welcome the dialogue between the nuclear-weapon States on security assurances. It is our hope that through this dialogue the nuclear-weapon States will soon be able to come out with their initiatives on how to get forward.

The Geneva Conference is engaged on issues instrumental to peace and stability in the world. We hope it can fulfil the expectations directed to it.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland for his important statement and also for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria, Ambassador Meghlaoui.

Mr. MEGHLAOUI (Algeria) (translated from French): Mr. President, it is with pleasure that I am taking the floor at the moment when you are occupying the Chair of the Conference on Disarmament. Your talents as a diplomat augur well for the success of our work and will be very useful during this important period of preparation of the end-of-year reports. Our gratitude and esteem are extended also to your distinguished predecessors, the Ambassador of India, His Excellency Satish Chandra, and His Excellency the Ambassador of Indonesia, Ambassador Soemadi Brotodiningrat, for the exemplary fashion in which they discharged their functions during the two previous terms of the presidency of the Conference.

My delegation has already taken advantage of the forum offered by this plenary to express its positions on certain items on the agenda of the Conference. It is taking the floor again today, when the third session is well advanced, to add a few clarifications on certain items that are important in our view.

I would like to begin by paying Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, a well-deserved tribute for the role that he is playing in order to make headway in our work. We also pay tribute to the chairmen of the two working groups, Ambassador Hoffmann and Ambassador Dembinski, as well as all the delegations that, either through direct contributions or through the assistance of their experts, have enabled the Ad Hoc Committee to embark resolutely on the task of drawing up a treaty.

Having said this, it must be noted candidly that the progress made, although significant, has not yet enabled us to settle certain fundamental points which might prove stumbling-blocks for the finalization of the treaty.

(Mr. Meghlaoui, Algeria)

Moreover, we have noted demands that seem to us to affect the very spirit of the agreement secured on 10 August 1993, when the Conference decided to negotiate a comprehensive and universal, internationally and effectively verifiable test-ban treaty. By way of example, exceptions authorizing certain types of nuclear test would run the risk of opening the door to abuse of the treaty, which would then be devoid of meaning. Several delegations have indicated that to present as peaceful objectives being pursued through a nuclear test was a contradiction in terms. In the same line of thinking, we believe that the procedure we should adopt with regard to existing nuclear weapons is not that tests should be conducted from time to time to ensure that they are "safe" or reliable but that they should be purely and simply dismantled, in accordance with the wishes of the overwhelming majority of States and repeated declarations in favour of disarmament.

We are nevertheless happy to note that the Conference has recovered a climate of cooperation and calm which it should never abandon. Discussions that have been going on since the beginning of the session are taking place in conditions which offer substantial grounds for hope. Now that the two working groups are basing their discussions on written documents, I would like to address certain elements of the future treaty. First of all, we think that nothing should be able to be interpreted as restricting or regulating the right to the peaceful use of nuclear technologies. This necessity is a condition for the universality of the treaty. Second, the treatment of questions dealing with the monitoring system has shown how much this depended on close and multifaceted cooperation among the States parties (for instance, the installation and link-up of the various monitoring networks, the setting up of inspection teams, the exchange of information, etc.). This raises the question of the differentiated capabilities of States in their participation in the monitoring systems and the benefit they will draw from it. Certain delegations have already expressed the willingness of their countries to provide technical and financial assistance to underpin this cooperation. We think we must begin to make this readiness tangible, in particular so as to reduce the time-lags needed to set up integrated monitoring networks, which some experts estimate will take years.

Third, a proposal has been made to define the bans on tests in the light of the environments in which they might take place. Such a choice would be likely to lead to numerous violations of the treaty. Certain States have a regrettable propensity to interpret international instruments in the light of narrow national interests. We think that a generic definition, such as a ban on all nuclear explosions in all environments and for all time, seems desirable.

Fourth, participation in verification activities should have a non-discriminatory character, give equal rights and identical obligations to all States and ensure the application of the provisions of the treaty on equal terms.

(Mr. Meghlaoui, Algeria)

Fifth, concerning entry into force, we think that at least all the nuclear-weapon States and all the countries with research programmes in the nuclear field or nuclear plants should accede to the treaty. However, we should try and find a mechanism that would prevent entry into force from being dependent on the particular will of one State or group of States.

Sixth, no State or group of States should have a permanent seat in any of the structures of the organization that will be set up under the treaty, or hold a right of veto. In particular, the membership of the executive council should be based on principles of rotation and geographical balance. This formula would not prevent a given region from designating the same State or States to represent it in the executive council, whenever it wished.

We would like to thank Ambassador Shannon for the efforts he is making in the context of his mandate and congratulate him on the results already obtained. Allow me to take this opportunity to recall that at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, Algeria was amongst those that called for a halt to the production of all types of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems and the production of fissile materials for military purposes. We subscribe to the view that the Conference on Disarmament, both on procedural grounds and for substantive reasons, is the appropriate framework for the negotiation of a multilateral, non-discriminatory, international and effectively verifiable agreement on the halting of the production of fissile material for military purposes. IAEA could enable the Conference on Disarmament to draw on its expertise for the establishment of a verification regime. Expertise from other bodies such as WHO, for instance, is also likely to be required.

The drafting of the mandate of the future ad hoc committee is of great importance. In this connection we think that United Nations General Assembly resolution 48/75 L constitutes a sound starting-point for this delicate exercise, whose successful completion will call for a real spirit of compromise from all concerned. An agreement on banning the production of fissile material must have a verification system. It will not be possible to avoid the question of existing stocks. This major dimension must be clearly addressed in the definition of the mandate of the future committee.

This year again, despite the inventive and open spirit of Ambassador Guillaume, whose efforts we welcome, we have not managed to make headway on the question of negative security assurances. Countries renouncing the nuclear option have a legitimate right to be given guarantees against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, on the basis of an international multilaterally negotiated and legally binding agreement. By its very nature, this agreement should commit the States which have nuclear weapons vis-à-vis those which have none; any different formula would run counter to the notion of a balance of mutual commitments and would give rise to supplementary difficulties.

Banning the use of a weapon of mass destruction is not in the realm of Utopia, as has been proved by the precedent in the field of chemical weapons, which are more widespread. We think that an international agreement on

(Mr. Meghlaoui, Algeria)

security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, discussed at the multilateral level and enforceable, is a means of strengthening the non-proliferation regime. This is why the refusal to recognize this claim is in itself a legitimate cause for concern. Recognition in a treaty of guarantees on the part of nuclear-weapon States would be a positive confidence-building measure which would help eliminate constraints arising out of apprehensions and suspicions about nuclear weapons.

On 31 May, my delegation introduced before this plenary, on behalf of the Group of 21, a proposal containing elements that could lay the basis for the elaboration of an international convention binding nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States in regard to security assurances. We believe that this proposal is reasonable and addresses certain considerations that have previously been highlighted by the nuclear-weapon States. It is time for the Conference on Disarmament to respond positively to it.

The objective of transparency is to strengthen confidence and security, prevent armed conflicts and promote disarmament. When setting up the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments with its present mandate, the Conference on Disarmament emphasized the need to abide by the terms of resolutions 46/36 and 47/52 L. The difficulties it has encountered this year in drawing up recommendations which would enjoy consensus stem from the conviction of many delegations belonging to the Group of 21 that the proposals put before the Committee so far are generally speaking aimed at perpetuating, to the benefit of those that already enjoy military pre-eminence, a situation of inequality based on the overproduction of weapons, as well as a propensity to systematically seek military applications of scientific and technological progress. This conviction has been strengthened by the attitude adopted with regard to the legitimate concerns of the non-aligned countries relating to weapons of mass destruction and dual-purpose technologies - concerns which were restated just a few weeks ago at the ministerial conference in Cairo. Transparency cannot serve as a distraction from the need to halt the arms race. This is why we query the idea of renewing the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee in the circumstances that currently exist. Are we entitled to present the arms race as inevitable when the functions of research and development are under the direct influence of Governments and the end of the East-West conflict is capable of opening up a path to a genuine process of disarmament which would not be confined to sending to the scrap heap the weapons that constitute the greatest burden? There is nothing pre-ordained about the arms race, which is primarily the result of and depends on political decisions.

The question of the prevention of an arms race in space is closely connected to the entire complex of problems pertaining to nuclear disarmament. My country would like to see the adoption of concrete measures which can effectively impede an arms race in space while at the same time enabling missile technologies to be used for peaceful purposes. The Conference on Disarmament has sufficient expertise to enable it to draw up a series of confidence-building, transparency and predictability measures - even an agreement on confidence-building measures. Many proposals put forward thus

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far in the context of the code of conduct form a cohesive whole whose adoption would not hamper either the devising of policies for space exploration by new States or the subsequent establishment of a minimum regime which would prevent an arms race in space, in particular by banning the placing of anti-satellite weapons in orbit.

Despite the laudable efforts of Ambassador Lampreia, efforts which we welcome, the problem of the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament has not had a positive outcome. Yet again this year the developments have not been fruitful. The lack of any alternative to the conclusions and recommendations of Ambassador O'Sullivan seems clearer now than ever. We think that it is time to respond to the resolve of States to become members of the Conference. The immediate increase of the number of member States to 60 should be complemented by the establishment of machinery that would allow the regular and controlled expansion of this forum.

We agree with those who have asserted that the world has changed. This is so evident that no particular effort is needed to reach this conclusion. One of the consequences of this new situation, we thought, should be greater democratization of decision-making in international bodies. As far as the Conference on Disarmament is concerned, the manner in which the Convention on chemical weapons was finalized reinforced this theory. Was this just a fleeting bright spot? This question is worth raising in the light of the conduct of certain delegations that give the impression - let us hope a mistaken one - that they are placing the discussions and negotiations in the context of efforts to preserve the status quo and defend the formula of unequal treaties.

The Conference on Disarmament would lose part of its essence if it forgot that, as its name implies, it has the task of negotiating disarmament agreements. The hope that we would like to voice is that when measures for arms control and disarmament are drawn up, efforts will be made to ensure that these measures are non-discriminatory, that they create genuine stability, that they are uniformly applicable to all States, that they establish a balance in terms of the responsibilities and obligations of States with nuclear weapons and those without, and that, lastly, as long as the goal of global disarmament has not been attained, the non-nuclear-weapon States will be able to benefit from assurances protecting them from the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Algeria, Ambassador Meghlaoui, for his statement and for the kind remarks he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Starr.

Mr. STARR (Australia): Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, and also to commend highly the work of your predecessor, Ambassador Soemadi Brotodiningrat of Indonesia. I reaffirm

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the deep commitment of the Australian delegation to cooperating with the presidency and other delegations to achieve the positive outcomes in this negotiating body on which Australia places such importance.

The critical role of arms control and disarmament in peace-building and in the development of cooperative security is an important element of the study on "Cooperating for peace" launched by Australia's Foreign Minister, Senator Gareth Evans, in response to the United Nations Secretary-General's call. As the Minister wrote, the very process of negotiating and concluding arms control and disarmament regimes "can have a highly beneficial impact on international peace and security as States agree, and are seen to agree, on the elimination of, or lower limits and controls on, armaments - in short, as they cooperate for peace".

In the post-cold-war environment the role of arms control and disarmament in cooperative security is one of increasing importance and enhanced potential. Nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament measures have been, and remain, central elements of international and regional efforts towards global security. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which provides the cornerstone for such efforts, has delivered benefits not just to international security in general, but specifically in terms of trade and other cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Australian Government believes that the fundamental underpinning of cooperative security and peaceful cooperation in nuclear matters provided by the NPT makes its indefinite extension in 1995 imperative. I would note that the recent meeting of the South Pacific Forum expressed the desire of its member countries to see the NPT extended indefinitely. The Forum also called for the early conclusion of the CTBT.

The Conference on Disarmament has been addressing these complementary arrangements - a comprehensive test ban, security assurances, and the prohibition of production of fissile material for weapons purposes. I would like to address each of these as well as other items on our agenda.

This body has been talking about a CTBT and to some extent preparing technically for NTB negotiations for years. And work on a possible arrangement has been undertaken intermittently for decades before this. The verification technologies under consideration are known and proven, though cost-effective international networks have to be developed. Against this background the importance of seizing the opportunity afforded by the consensus to ban testing and the restraint in testing by most nuclear-weapon States is obvious to us. Our efforts will be a litmus test of the CD's capability to respond to post-cold-war opportunities.

The CD is the world's disarmament negotiating body, but to speak plainly, this body does not have a long record of achievement. The CWC is its major product and that 20-year negotiation only produced results in the wake of the cold war and the hot war in the Gulf. Surely it is not necessary to have an international upheaval in order to imbue this body with the sense of urgency

(Mr. Starr, Australia)

needed to achieve results. That should flow from the unambiguous call by the international community for a priority effort, and such a call was made on CTBT at the last General Assembly.

My delegation sets no deadlines; we recognize that it is one thing to talk about negotiations and another to undertake them. The organizational task of processing a range of views and information into text is formidable. But these last few weeks have shown the value of addressing our task with an added sense of urgency. Delegations generally accept the need to produce a comprehensive and relatively coherent, though bracketed text, which does justice to the substantial products of our negotiations so far. If we are to achieve this and continue to get results beyond September we must retain that sense of urgency which is not driven by artificial deadlines, but by the sense of this body meeting the expectations of world opinion and seizing this historic opportunity.

Without this, there is a risk of losing the plot, of sadly drifting into years of protracted haggling. Let me be clear. We are not advocating a hasty, and thus possibly superficial approach to the negotiations. We are not proposing that States abandon basic national interests. But we are urging strongly that in the common interest States work actively and urgently to fit these around an agreement on a test-ban treaty that is tolerable to all the negotiating parties.

Security assurances are still relevant in this post-cold-war world and my delegation is disappointed at the lack of progress. In contrast to the demandeur/giver relationship of the past, the international community now has a strong common interest in ensuring that the limited utility of nuclear weapons in our contemporary world is underscored and given legal form, helping cap and roll back horizontal and vertical proliferation pressures.

The nuclear-weapon States have a special responsibility to exercise leadership and provide a credible response to the reasonable expectations of the international community. This requires an arrangement which is binding and which provides significantly more than the existing unilateral declarations.

A resolution of the Security Council could be crafted so as to set in place a new and universal legal rule prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices against non-nuclear-weapon States. This would be a rule binding on all members of the United Nations and revocable only by means of a new resolution. Such a resolution - which once passed would take immediate universal effect - could have comparable international legal status to a multilateral treaty if drafted to reflect an intention to bind Security Council and other United Nations members, drawing on the Council's United Nations Charter authority. The resolution could provide updated and more explicit positive security assurances, recognizing the importance to certain regions of confidence that the Security Council and especially its permanent members, will act firmly in the event of nuclear aggression or threats of such aggression.

(Mr. Starr, Australia)

We would envisage the beneficiaries of a contemporary security assurances package as only the non-nuclear-weapon States which are parties to the NPT or comparable multilateral non-proliferation undertakings, and are in compliance with the full-scope nuclear safeguards which verify these undertakings.

We believe the innovative "brainstorming" sessions convened by Ambassador Guillaume of Belgium in the NSA Ad Hoc Committee revealed a convergence on the principle that any future enhanced and binding security assurances package should apply only to those States which have themselves already made matching and binding commitments of this sort.

In crafting a new arrangement, it is our hope that the exceptions incorporated into existing negative security assurances could be reconsidered in the light of their relevance, or lack of it, in today's world.

My Government urges the nuclear-weapon States to take up this challenge quickly so that the disarmament and non-proliferation potential of a well-conceived security assurances package can be realized and can complement the benefits of indefinite extension of the NPT and a CTBT of indefinite duration.

We welcome the vigorous and untiring efforts of Ambassador Shannon of Canada, in his capacity as Special Coordinator of the initiative to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. Like many others, we are disappointed that agreement on a mandate has escaped us so far. We find hard to understand opposition to basing the mandate on the consensus resolution of UNGA48. It will be a sad reflection on this body if this Conference cannot start negotiations after the world body has achieved consensus.

We continue to believe that the resolution provides a viable basis for a mandate, bearing in mind Ambassador Shannon's clear statement that the adoption of a negotiating mandate and creation of an ad hoc committee does not preclude discussion of the appropriate scope of the convention in that committee.

While Australia has not yet developed definitive ideas on the shape of a cut-off convention, we recognize the complexity of the issues and believe strongly that any process should, at an early stage, explore the technical and other elements of a concept still not well understood. A mandate to negotiate will enable a start to be made in clarifying such issues.

In a final remark on current non-proliferation and disarmament efforts in the nuclear field, I would like to go beyond the direct responsibilities of this body. Australia welcomes the sustained and impressive efforts of African countries to establish a nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaty for the African region. In this context I would like to pay tribute to Dr. Sola Ogunbanwo and his African colleagues, who have organized and directed the five experts meetings which have produced the draft treaty. Their persistence and energy in pursuing the objective of an African NWFZ have been key factors in the achievements so far.

(Mr. Starr, Australia)

We encourage the finalization and opening for signature of this treaty as soon as possible. Like its counterparts, the South Pacific nuclear-weapon-free zone and the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the African zone will make an important contribution to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and to the enhanced security for the States of that region and beyond.

There is debate on the scope and value of the work in the area of transparency in armaments. We consider it a key element in efforts to reduce mistrust and miscalculation in the security environment, and an important component of cooperative security as advocated by the Australian Foreign Minister. The fact that there have been numerous practical proposals put forward in the TIA Ad Hoc Committee over the last two years is testament to the significance and relevance of this topic. We look forward to continuing attention to these and further proposals in the TIA Ad Hoc Committee next year. An important step towards increased transparency was achieved through the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The fact that the recent series of experts' meetings on the Register was unable to agree on expansion of the scope of the Register in no way detracts from the existing instrument. Priority should be given to promoting universal participation.

In this area more than most, regional efforts complement global measures. They constitute an important means of addressing the specific regional security context. A concrete example is the discussion of transparency approaches in the Asia-Pacific as well demonstrated by the inaugural meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum, held in Bangkok on 25 July. That Forum agreed to study a series of proposals for cooperative security and trust-building measures, many of which are premised on the principle of transparency, and all of which are tailored to the specific requirements of the region.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is an important item on the CD agenda, with the potential for valuable work when CD resources and agenda permit. The concerns of the outer space Ad Hoc Committee relate directly to the objectives of limiting WMD proliferation and strengthening cooperative security arrangements.

Australia supports the negotiation of arms control measures such as a ban on the deployment of space-based weapons. Progress on this long-standing goal should be possible in the post-cold-war world, though any global regime dealing with weapons in space must contribute to global stability, and not detract from it by automatically banning all military uses of space. These include essential arms control monitoring.

In the longer term, we believe this Committee could contribute to developing global norms on the use and testing of ballistic missiles. In this respect we reiterate our interest in proposals for a confidence-building measure involving pre-launch notification of space launches and ballistic missiles. Such a CBM could help promote peaceful space cooperation by removing suspicion about the possible diversion of technology to missile programmes of concern.

(Mr. Starr, Australia)

We are disappointed that the issue of the expansion of the membership of the CD remains unresolved despite the significant amount of energy and creativity which has been put into finding a solution to this issue. As on issues of substance, the CD must respond to the expectations of the international community to enhance the representativeness of the Conference through expanded membership. In the meantime, I welcome the active engagement of new non-member States in the CD's work.

To conclude, I would like to draw the attention of delegations to important work on certain weapons under way in Geneva beyond the CD's own agenda. I refer to the problem of land-mines now being discussed by the experts group on the 1980 Convention on certain conventional weapons.

Australia advocates that Protocol II of the CCW, which deals with land-mines, should apply to non-international as well as to international conflicts. In Australia's view mines should not be exported to States which are not party to Protocol II. We believe it is also vital that in future, anti-personnel mines should be detectable and incorporate a self-destruct mechanism to ensure mines do not remain unexploded at the end of hostilities, threatening the lives and livelihood of the civilian population. It is also a useful protection for armed forces.

Last week a Minister of the Cambodian Government addressed the experts group. There are literally millions of mines left there, and tens of millions more in places like Afghanistan and Mozambique. We must seek feasible but direct solutions to this horror. Australia has, or has provided mine clearance teams in all three of these countries, but in the longer term we believe the only solution is the broad establishment of international standards along the practical and achievable lines we advocate.

There is a great need for action on land-mines, and the real concern of States and peoples provides an opportunity to strengthen the Convention and widen adherence. My Government urges all States which have not done so to accede to or ratify the Convention, and to participate in this work.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia, Ambassador Starr, for his statement and also for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. This concludes our list of speakers for today. Does any delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? I see no request for the floor.

May I now turn to the informal paper circulated by the secretariat, containing the timetable of meetings to be held next week by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies? This timetable has been prepared in consultation with the chairmen of the ad hoc committees. As you will see, next Thursday after the plenary meeting, it is planned to hold an informal meeting of the Conference to begin consideration of the technical parts of the annual report to the General Assembly, which is contained in document CD/WP.456.

(The President)

This document will be distributed, in all languages, to delegations in their boxes on Monday, 22 August. As usual, the timetable is merely indicative and may be changed, if necessary. On that understanding, I suggest that we adopt it.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: That concludes our business for today. However, before adjourning, I wish to remind you that this meeting will be immediately followed by informal open-ended consultations on improved and effective functioning of the Conference. I also wish to announce that informal open-ended consultations on transparency in armaments will be held by Ambassador Boytha in Conference Room I immediately after this plenary meeting.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 25 August 1994 at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.